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ABSTRACT

After a brief explanation of Project SAFE (Survey of Administrative Functional Efficiency) as a system designed to provide necessary feedback to school principals, the author lists the components of the project: (1) a confidential report to the principal summarizing the results of administering the SAFE instrument in the school, (2) a profile of the staff's view of the ideal principal and how the participating principal compared to it, and (3) feedback on how teachers might attempt to improve selected situations at the school. The author then lists dissertations completed as Project SAFE research and their findings. The research concerns the relationship between the administrative functioning of principals and other variables such as demographic variables and desired personality traits. One study found significant personality trait predictors of principals' efficiency for eight different principal functions. Another examined the impact of a communications and leadership training program on teachers' views of ideal principal personality traits and found no effects. (Author/JM)

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PROJECT SAFE

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A Feedback Project Designed to Assist Principals

Every administrator is responsible for reaching the objectives of his/her organization. To achieve these objectives plans have to be formulated, decisions made and actions taken. Principals cannot accomplish this alone.

In order to function efficiently, every principal needs feedback from many sources on a variety of topics. The new administrator needs feedback in order to begin functioning effectively. The continuing administrator needs feedback in order to increase functional efficiency. Project SAFE (Survey of Administrative Functional Efficiency) was designed to provide that necessary feedback information.

Every participating principal received: (1) a confidential report regarding the results of administering SAFE in his school. "For principals eyes only" feedback designed to assist the principal in his self improvement program as well as in enabling him to become more effective in the management of his educational unit; (2) profile of the kind of principal the teachers of his/her school prize in regards to certain personality traits and how the participating principal compares; (3) feedback on how his teachers might attempt to improve selected situations at his school.

It is believed that Project SAFE assists principals with (1) the human relations task of building a rapport between himself and his staff; (2) in achieving long-range goals and short-term objectives to facilitate organizational direction and evaluation; (3) determining faculty perceived needs so that organization and planning of goals and

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objectives might be more realistic. Every principal desires to plan school programs in accordance with the perceived needs of the instructional staff. Their values and attitudes toward school needs and desirable changes will have a definite effect on the outcome of any administrative planning. Their opinions need to be determined before such planning is undertaken. Project SAFE assists each participating principal in becoming more aware of his faculty's point of view.

Dissertations Completed as Project SAFE Research:

Dr. Stanley Swartz, in his study of the relationship between administrative functional efficiency of elementary principals and selected demographic data of the principals, failed to find any relationship between these two areas.[1]

Dr. Rosa Carter, in her study of the relationship between selected demographic data of teachers and the administrative functional efficiency of elementary principals, found no significant relationship between these two areas.[2]

Dr. Veronica Gold, in her study of the relationship of the administrative functions of communication and staff development, found that there were significant trait differences of high and low real, and high and low ideal efficient elementary principals as perceived by elementary teachers. Her research further revealed that there were significant desirable and undesirable personality traits as perceived by teachers of their real and ideal principals. Those desirable personality traits of elementary principals were identified as: adventurous, aggressive, ambitious, decisive, determined, discerning, enthusiastic, forceful, humorous, relaxed, stimulating, and well read. Personality traits of

elementary principals which were identified as being undesirable were: complacent, defensive, domineering, passive, permissive, possessive, preoccupied, and secretive.[3]

Dr. Louis Aikens studied the effect of perceived administrative styles of teachers on perceptions that teachers had of their elementary principals' administrative efficiency in situations requiring principal-teacher interpersonal relations. He found that the teachers' perceived administrative style did not significantly affect the principals' efficiency in situations of interpersonal relations.[4]

Dr. Robert Witten investigated the relationship which existed between personality traits and efficiency of elementary principals on the selected administrative functions of: planning, organizing, decision making, coordination, research, budgeting, plant/equipment/supplies, and curriculum, as perceived by certified elementary classroom teachers. A random sample of sixty-six schools was selected for analysis from all public elementary schools in the State of Ohio. Of this sample, thirty-eight schools representing over 500 teachers, submitted survey returns suitable for analysis of their principals' perceived personality traits and efficiency on the eight administrative functions under study.

The Survey of Administrative Functional Efficiency, a survey tool developed by Dr. Leslie J. Chamberlin of Bowling Green State University and Dr. William J. Beausay of Bluffton College was utilized for this study. This instrument was designed to measure administrative functional efficiency and personality traits of administrators as perceived by teachers. Through a series of preliminary treatments of the data, it was found that teachers perceived: the average elementary principals as

having high efficiency ratings in the performance of their job related functions; the functions under study as being highly correlated administrative functions of the principalship; the personality traits used for predicting administrative efficiency as being independent predictors.

The forward stepwise inclusion multiple regression technique was used to test the relationship between each personality trait and each selected administrative function. Significant personality trait predictors of principal efficiency were found for each function under study. Those personality traits found to be predictors of administrative functional efficiency for the following functions were: 1) planning: adventurous, methodical, stimulating, unopinionated, not passive, and not secretive; 2) organizing: contented, enthusiastic, independent, and unopinionated; 3) decision making: aggressive, decisive, enthusiastic, stimulating, undetermined, unexcitable, unopinionated, not passive, and not secretive; 4) coordination: decisive, enthusiastic, tough, undetermined, not preoccupied, and not secretive; 5) research: adventurous, decisive, enthusiastic, stimulating, well read, undetermined, unopinionated, not secretive, and not talkative; 6) budgeting: aggressive, independent, domineering, enthusiastic, and undetermined; 7) plant/equipment/supplies: aggressive, enthusiastic, independent, undetermined, and unopinionated; 8) curriculum: adventurous, enthusiastic, stimulating, independent, undetermined, unopinionated, and not secretive.

Even though teachers perceived efficient principals as displaying specific personality traits for each function, it became evident through the analysis of the multiple correlation coefficient for each function that something else besides personality traits was also responsible for

the total efficiency of principals. This research has at least identified those leadership ingredients relevant to one of the factors of administrative efficiency, personality.[5]

Dr. Aron Ross attempted to determine if teachers exposed to a Communications and Leadership Training Program (C.L.T.P.) would view their principals differently, or if their ideas of ideal principal traits would change. To answer this question the sixty-six teachers who enrolled in E.D.F.I. 595, Teacher Effectiveness and Classroom Handling, were recruited to form the experimental group, this was the C.L.T.P. These teachers were asked to select a fellow teacher from their school building to participate in the study. This group formed the control group.

The measurement instrument used was Section II of the Survey of Administrative Functional Efficiency (S.A.F.E.) developed by Dr. Leslie J. Chamberlin and Dr. William J. Beausay. This instrument solicited the teachers' perceptions of their principals' traits and traits of their ideal principal. Instrument S.A.F.E. was administered twice to both groups. The first administration served as the pretest and the second as the posttest.

Pretest data was subjected to a multivariate analysis of variance statistical test to assure pre-experimental equivalency between the two groups. The pretest and the posttest data were subjected to a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance statistical procedure to determine if the C.L.T.P. produced the expected results.

It was found that the teachers in the experimental group did not view their real principals or their ideal principals differently than the teachers in the control group. The experimental treatment failed to show the anticipated impact upon teachers' perceptions of their principals.

Serendipitous findings were discovered upon study of the data. A grand mean score for each of the forty real and ideal traits were computed. It was found that thirteen of the ideal traits had a mean score above the descriptive mean and were defined as traits teachers want their ideal principal to possess. These were: adventurous, aggressive, ambitious, decisive, determined, discerning, enthusiastic, forceful, humorous, relaxed, sensitive, stimulating, and well-read. It was also found that eight of the ideal traits had a mean score below the descriptive mean and were defined as traits teachers do not want their ideal principal to possess. These were: complacent, defensive, domineering, passive, permissive, possessive, preoccupied, and secretive.

These findings are all the more significant in that they replicate the Gold findings.[6]

References

[1]Stanley L. Swartz, "A Demographic Analysis of Administrative Functional Efficiency as Perceived by Teachers in Ohio Public Elementary Schools," (Ph.D. dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1976).

[2]Rosa Roberto Carter, "An Analysis of Teachers' Demographic Data and Teachers' Perception of Administrative Functional Efficiency," (Ph.D. dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1976).

[3]Veronica Elizabeth Gold, "The Relationship Between Functions and Traits of Elementary School Principals as Perceived by Teachers," (Ph.D. dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1977).

[4]Louis Aikens, "The Effects of Teacher's Perceived Administrative Style on Evaluations of Their Principal's Administrative Efficiency in Functions Requiring Interpersonal Relations," (Ph.D. dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1978).

[5]Robert Witten, "Personality Trait Predictors of Elementary School Principal Efficiency on Selected Administrative Functions as Perceived by Elementary School Teachers," (Ph.D. dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1979).

[6]Aron Ross, "The Impact of a Communications and Leadership Training Program on Altering Teachers' Perceptions of their Principals' Traits," (Ph.D. dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1980).